



STATE OF WASHINGTON

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

P.O. Box 42560 • Olympia, Washington 98504-2560 • (360) 902-1800

April 2003 Animal Health quarterly newsletter

STATE VETERINARIAN'S MESSAGE

Another spring has rolled around and it is time to wonder if the legislature is going to adjourn on time or if it will go into extra innings. It looks like legislation might just pass that will save the Livestock Identification Program for another 7 or 8 years. The bill needs to be voted on in the House and signed by the Governor before we can be sure that the program is saved, but as of this date it seems on track. If you are doing brand inspections for the department, watch for fee increases that you will need to collect after July 1, 2003.

We are also watching the budget bills to see how bad the Animal Health Program's budget is cut this time around. We have generally come out all right over the past 15 years, but this time the state is really in a bad way. We could lose from 3% to 5% of our operating funding for the program. We will have a very difficult time maintaining our programs and our disease free classifications if we lose any positions. Our involvement in emergency management may save us, as that should be one of the agency's priorities.

We are in the waiting mode to see what West Nile Virus has in store for us this year. So far over 166,000 doses of vaccine have been shipped into the state. That is enough to vaccinate about 80,000 horses. Our best estimate is that there are about 250,000 cared for horses in the state. You can also refer to our Web site, <http://www.wa.gov/agr/FoodAnimal/AnimalHealth/default.htm>, for WNV information and a chart for 2002 and 2003 with running totals of cases by county.

The battle against Exotic Newcastle Disease in California goes on and counties in Texas and New Mexico were added to the quarantine list. If you have clients with backyard poultry flocks, especially game fowl, please warn them about this disease. Our field veterinarians, trained as Foreign Animal Disease Diagnosticians, are ready to work with private veterinarians and bird and poultry owners free of charge to assess the flock and collect samples for laboratory testing. Contact our office at 360-902-1878 or the USDA APHIS Veterinary Services Area Office at 360-753-9430 to request handout literature. Contact either office immediately to report high death loss or unusual disease signs in birds or any other animals.

Since this will be my last newsletter message, I must say that it has been a pleasure and honor serving the profession and the industries over the past 17 years and it has been quite a trip for a country kid from Illinois.

Robert W. Mead, DVM

New offices for VBoG—The Veterinary Board of Governors relocated from Olympia to Tumwater. The new physical location is Point Plaza East, 310 Israel Road SE, Tumwater. The mailing address remains the same—P.O. Box 47868, Olympia 98504. The Customer Service Center can be reached at 360-236-4700.

Exotic Newcastle Disease—Exotic Newcastle Disease (END) was confirmed in Texas in backyard fowl on April 9, 2003. Previously, END was confirmed October 1, 2002, in California. On January 16, 2003, END was confirmed in a backyard flock in Nevada. On February 4, 2003, END was confirmed in a backyard flock in Arizona.

In California, 8 counties are quarantined—Imperial, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, Santa Barbara and Ventura. In Arizona, 3 counties are quarantined—La Paz, Mohave and Yuma. In Nevada, 2 counties are quarantined—Clark and Nye. In Texas, 2 counties are quarantined—El Paso and Hudspeth. New Mexico issued quarantines for 3 counties as a precautionary measure—Dona Ana, Luna and Otero. The quarantines in Arizona and Nevada may be released within the next few weeks.

Poultry and poultry products cannot be moved out of the quarantined counties. Eggs can be moved after they are washed, sanitized and packed in new materials. END does **not** pose a risk to human health. Poultry and egg products are safe for consumers.

END is a rapidly spreading, viral disease of domestic poultry and other birds. The primary source of virus is the chicken, but other domestic birds and certain wild birds are susceptible and may be sources. Virus is present in exhaled air, respiratory discharges, droppings, eggs laid during illness and all parts of the carcass during infection and at death. Chickens are readily infected by droppings, aerosols and by contaminated water or food. Death can occur in up to 90% of exposed birds.

Coughing, sneezing, gasping and abnormal respiratory sounds are often accompanied or followed by involvement of the nervous system, such as drooping wings, dragging legs, twisting of the head and neck, depression, lack of appetite and paralysis. Some strains of the virus result in diarrhea and swelling of the head. Young chickens are more susceptible and show signs sooner than older ones. In laying flocks, egg production may stop. Eggs from infected flocks may be abnormal in color, shape or surface and the white portion may be watery.

What can you do?

- Sick, dying and dead birds must be tested to confirm END because this disease can mimic other bird diseases. Submit birds to a diagnostic laboratory whenever unusual disease occurs. For details on submitting sick, dying or dead birds, contact Dr. A. Singh Dhillon, Director, WSU's Avian Health and Food Safety Laboratory in Puyallup at 253-445-4537.
- Don't keep pet birds on commercial poultry operations. Don't allow employees to keep their own birds or poultry.
- Maintain good records on purchases and sales. If a disease problem arises, these documents can help us track and eradicate disease rapidly.
- Keep poultry houses locked and allow entry only to essential personnel. Restrict the movement of vehicles entering and leaving your farm. If dealers must enter your farm, insist that crates and trucks are clean and never allow dealers' crates to be placed in your houses. Disinfect tires and the undercarriages of all vehicles as they enter or leave the farm or premises.
- Animals should not be allowed access to poultry buildings. Work with a pest control professional to keep wild birds and rodents out of houses.
- Personnel should wear clean or disposable coveralls, head cover and plastic boots or boots which can be washed and disinfected. Use a disinfectant footbath, which is changed daily. Footbaths should be used when entering and leaving the poultry house or egg room.
- Growers should not wear poultry house clothing and footwear away from the farm. Do not visit other poultry operations and do not attend auctions where poultry are sold. Do not bring birds from slaughter channels back to the farm.
- Do not use equipment from another farm in your chicken house or on your farm. If you must loan tools or equipment, ensure the items are thoroughly cleaned and disinfected prior to entry and reuse on your premises.
- Dispose of dead birds either by incineration, composting, rendering or burial. Never dispose of them in fields and do not allow them to pile up. Do not spread manure from any flock that has experienced illness and mortality within the previous 3 weeks, unless the manure is composted properly.

Washington State Department of Agriculture adopted an emergency regulation that prohibits moving all avian species into this state if they originate from counties where END is confirmed. The new regulation also specifies requirements for anyone who organizes a bird show or avian event. An official, valid health certificate or National Poultry Improvement Plan document must accompany any bird shipments. On either type of document, there must be a statement to the effect that the shipment did not originate from a quarantined area. For details, contact the State Veterinarian's Office, 360-902-1878, or refer to the Web site at <http://www.wa.gov/agr/FoodAnimal/AnimalHealth/default.htm>.

News from Other States—

- ◆ **Idaho**—Dr. Dan Crowell is Acting State Veterinarian for Idaho. He replaces Dr. Bob Hillman, who recently became the Texas State Veterinarian. Congratulations Dr. Crowell. (E-mail April 4, 2003)
- ◆ **Iowa**—Iowa was recently approved for Pseudorabies Stage IV status. This brings the state closer to Stage 5 or free status. (E-mail April 4, 2003)
- ◆ **Oregon**—**The Oregon Department of Agriculture named Dr. Brad LeaMaster as State Veterinarian effective April 15. Dr. LeaMaster succeeds Dr. Andrew Clark, who is returning to eastern Oregon as a field veterinarian after serving as State Veterinarian for the past 7 years. Congratulations to both Drs. LeaMaster and Clark as they start their new career paths. (News release April 9, 2003)**
- ◆ **Pennsylvania**—Several Pennsylvania horses contracted the neurological form of equine herpes. For more information, contact the Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture, Bureau of Animal Health and Diagnostic Services, at 717-783-6677 or c-animalem@state.pa.us.

In February 2003, several horses at Penn National Racetrack in Grantville were diagnosed with the neurologic form of EHV-1. The virus was identified in 5 horses from one barn at the racetrack. Two of these horses were euthanized after becoming recumbent. The illness appears to have been contained to one barn through a voluntary quarantine, which has now been lifted. Restrictions on shipping to Philadelphia Park have also been lifted. There have been no new cases reported. It is not uncommon for periodic outbreaks of EHV-1 to occur in Pennsylvania, and usually these outbreaks are contained to one or 2 locations and a small number of horses. (April 1, 2003, news release)

- ◆ **Texas**—
- New Texas livestock health regulations for Mexican-origin feeder, rodeo and roping cattle have fallen victim to the state's financial crunch and will not be enforced until at least August 1, after agency budgets are finalized. The rules were aimed at protecting Texas cattle herds from TB. Mexican-origin breeding cattle were not included in these new regulations, because very few are imported and these animals enter under strict USDA TB testing and quarantine rules already in place.

Texas lost its TB-free status in June 2002 after 2 infected herds were detected and depopulated in 2001-2002. In addition to Michigan, which is no longer TB-free, California recently detected 3 TB-infected cattle herds and New Mexico has had two. (News release March 5, 2003)

- Dr. Bob Hillman became the Texas State Veterinarian April 1. Born on a ranch near Medina in Bandera County, Dr. Hillman grew up in Cameron and earned his DVM in 1971 from Texas A&M University. For the past 30 years, he's lived in Idaho, many of those years serving as Idaho's State Veterinarian. Dr. Hillman replaced Dr. James Lenarduzzi, who was acting as the Interim State Veterinarian. Congratulations Dr. Hillman. (News release April 2, 2003)

Veterinarian Honored—Dr. Peter Tran was named 2002 Outstanding Citizen of the Year in Prosser. He is the Animal Health Area Veterinarian for southeastern Washington State. Dr. Tran, his wife An and son Willy live in Prosser.

Dr. Tran received the award at the 47th Annual Prosser Community Awards banquet January 27, 2003. The award was presented to recognize his many years of tireless efforts and the time he has contributed to his community.

Dr. Tran has been part of the Animal Health Program since 1989. He has been president of the Board of Directors of the Prosser School Board and is currently president of the Prosser Youth/Community Partnership. He is actively involved with the Kiwanis Club, Knights of Columbus and Jubilee Ministry. He serves as President of the Annie Tran Centers for Grief and Loss, a grief-counseling center for children named for his late daughter.

Editor: Kathleen M. Connell, DVM, Assistant State Veterinarian – (360) 902-1835 — fax (360) 902-2087 – e-mail: kconnell@agr.wa.gov

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